

Third Sunday in Advent

Isaiah and St Paul tell their communities to hold on and wait in joyful hope for the coming of Jesus despite whatever was going on around them. This same message applies today even though people may try to find reasons not to rejoice in what some would say a crazy world where things seem to change every minute and difficult to keep up with. Our reality is distorted by a constant inundation of bad news. It seems there is little reason to rejoice especially in the face of human suffering? We see that when the lowest of the least hear the message, they rejoice. Those in power react with fear because they know that good news for all is not good news for them. Their survival techniques are mass slaughter of the innocent people. The real story of Christmas is it is a subversive act directly aimed at the political power of the time. Isaiah's message about freedom from oppression, heartbreak, captivity, imprisonment, mourning, robbery, and wrongdoings, is not just for the oppressed but for those listening in - those who are in power - who need to learn that their actions impact on others - how our actions impact on LGBTQIA people, immigrants, refugees, endangered species, or compromised eco-systems. We know that what we do and say impact on others for good or ill. Because of our interconnectedness, we impact on others and the Earth on a daily basis. Isaiah 61 calls us to consider who are the vulnerable one among us - those praying and longing for freedom from oppression, heartbreak, captivity, imprisonment, mourning, robbery, and wrongdoings. Systems, including Home Affairs, Border Force, Centrelink, need

to be changed to protect the vulnerable among us. In some places signs appeared recently, *'When all this (Covid-19) is over, how do you want the world to be different?'* There were various responses but one said, 'When all this is over, I want to live in a different world where I can be heard.' Though a personal cry, it was also a collective cry. It was so for God's people in Isaiah's time as in ours. Isaiah was sent to the poor, the broken-hearted, captives and prisoners because *'God hears the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth!'* God focuses on the most impotent among the people - the victims of tyrants and systemic injustice. Mary's song today conveys a similar theme and her message is a more radical one than Isaiah's prophecy. Such a message can still get people 'red-tagged'.

Fr Claude Mostowik

Christmas Mass Times

Please book into the Dec 24 and 25 masses.

Dec 24: 5pm (Kids Mass) and 7pm

Dec 25: 9am and 10.30am

Dec 26: 9am Feast of St Stephen
Vigil 6pm

Dec 27: 9am and 6pm Feast of the Holy Family

Dec 28 - 31: 9am

Jan 1: 9am New Years Day

Mass Times

Saturday 6pm

Sunday 9am and 6pm

Wed., Thurs. and Fri. 9.15am

Please pray for our sick, especially Arthur Haddad, Norman Hay, Wendy Bridges, Margaret Farrugia, Nick Hurst and Mary Therese, Pat Little

In Memoriam

Kathleen Mary Vaughan, Catherine Ellen O'Donoghue, Craig Joseph Irwin, John William Walton, Norman Hammond and William Francis Madden.

There are Planned Giving flyers at the church entrance. Please feel free to fill one in.

Please fill in the 'Mass Attendance' sheet at the front. This is a state requirement so we can remain open and keep having our mass.

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2020

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home -- so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. [...] Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world." Eleanor Roosevelt

Vinnies Christmas Hamper Appeal
Thank you to all those that donated goods over the past weeks. Also thanks to all those that gave to the Vinnies Christmas appeal.

Also, we will be finalising the hampers on Dec 19 at 2pm in the church. The hampers will be delivered on Dec 20 after 9am mass. All volunteers are welcome.

St Mary's Catholic Church † 21 Swanson St, Erskineville



A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney Abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with a crime are the police. If you - or anyone you know - have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org

You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance.

The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.